



# MY KOREA, MY LIFE:

## CAROLINA USQUIANO-GRISALES / PFC / 42A / S1

BY 1LT NATHAN JONES

### NCJ: Tell me a little bit about yourself.

- CU: I am a middle child; born in Columbia but I was raised in New Jersey. I graduated from high school when I was 17 and went straight to college. I went to Berkeley College for criminal justice for about 2 years. Before I graduated, I had about one semester left and I decided to enlist in military service. In 2009, I signed my contract for 88M and went to basic training at Fort Leonard-Wood but was reclassified to 42A. The second time I went to basic I went to Fort Sill, OK. I completed my MOS training as a 42A and I got stationed here in Korea, so this is my first duty station. The hard part about this is that my husband is stationed in Fort Bragg and I am stationed here.

### NCJ: Why did you want to join the military?

- CU: The real reason I decided to stop my education in college is because I was not getting any financial help. I was paying for my tuition myself and I was paying for all of my classes and books. It got to the point where I was working three jobs. I had no time for school. I wanted a job that could help me pay back my school loans and that could advance my career. The reason I majored in criminal justice is that I love law enforcement and I want to work with an agency like the FBI someday. I was told that to advance my career I should get any job with the government and what better way to do that than in the military?

### NCJ: What has been your favorite thing to do in Korea?

- CU: Everything! It's a completely different experience, completely different from the states. Even though in the states we have a little bit of everything, it's different when you actually get to experience the culture. Koreans can be very conservative when it comes to their own culture. Their food is incredible. Way too spicy for me and sometimes I don't know what I'm eating but it's an adventure! And you never know until you try. Unless you try to experience a culture you never know what you could be missing.

### NCJ: Being in Korea is like being in \_\_\_\_.

- CU: An adventure park!

### NCJ: Tell me about an experience in the Army that you will never forget.

- CU: When I was in basic training and we were doing our first road march. I believe that it was a 5k, we had our rucksacks with everything packed inside and I was walking in front and

fell down. I remember that all my friends stopped the march and came back around to pick me up. They wouldn't move forward until they came back to pick me up. They become more than co-workers; it created a strong bond, like a family.

### NCJ: Tell me about a leader in your Army career whom you looked up to.

- CU: MSG Carter. She has shown me that you can be a female and you can do the same job as a male. She is a perfect example that no matter who you are, where you come from, or what your religion is, if you really want something you can work as hard as you can to get it and everything is possible. You just need to keep moving forward no matter how bumpy the road can be. You just need to believe in yourself.

### NCJ: What is one piece of advice you would give to a new Army private being stationed here?

- CU: My advice would be that even though sometimes Korea seems to be so far away from your family, it's not. You need to make yourself strong enough to understand that. The reason you take the time to reenlist in the army is for better opportunity, whether it's for you or your family or another reason. You're going to find yourself working with great people: people you went to basic with, people from other stations. Everything is what you make it. If you're positive and you have a great attitude then you will realize that time flies by and you will want to stay here even longer.

### NCJ: What is your favorite word?

- CU: Selfless service.

### NCJ: What is your least favorite word?

- CU: Quit or quitter.

### NCJ: What sound or noise do you love?

- CU: When I hear my parents calling my name!

### NCJ: What sound or noise do you hate?

- CU: Hearing somebody who is sad or crying.

### NCJ: What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

- CU: Law enforcement, like an FBI agent.

### NCJ: What profession would you not like to do?

- CU: Flip burgers.

### NCJ: If heaven exists, what would you like to hear God say when you arrive at the pearly gates?

- CU: Everything's going to be okay. Just keep moving forward. 